

NORTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER TRAIL

TRAIL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Auburn State Recreation Area has an established network of trails throughout the American River Canyon that provide a variety of recreational opportunities. With the substantial growth that Placer County has experienced over the last two decades and the associated demand for recreational facilities—specifically hiking, biking, and equestrian activity along the North Fork American River—expansion of the trail network in this area has emerged as a priority to accommodate County residents and visitors alike.

Consequently, Placer County Department of Facility Services (Facility Services), in conjunction with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), has prepared the *North Fork American River Trail Plan* (herein referred to as the “Trail Plan”) to augment the existing trail network in response to this demand. The North Fork American River Trail project is proposed as a multiple use trail that will begin at the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River and end at Ponderosa Bridge, approximately 12.6 miles upstream.

The purpose of the Trail Plan is to provide Facility Services with a working document that describes the project background setting, and scope; and provides guidelines for plan implementation including detailed trail construction techniques, and preliminary cost estimates. The Trail Plan will also be used to assist the County in 1) coordinating the environmental review process; 2) informing the community about the project; 3) applying for grants to fund trail development; and 4) soliciting bids for trail construction.

BACKGROUND

The genesis for the County’s project grew out of a concept initiated by Placer County Supervisor Rex Bloomfield to develop a continuous trail from Sacramento to Carson City, Nevada, along the North Fork American River canyon; this conceptual plan is referred to as the Capital-to-Capital Trail or “Cap-to-Cap” Trail. The Cap-to-Cap trail concept has been around in various forms for decades.

Several years ago, Placer County staff and elected officials began meeting with the primary land management agencies that had jurisdiction along the proposed Cap-to-Cap trail route; they also met with interested trail groups to gauge interest and to gain support for the conceptual project. As momentum increased and some funding sources were tentatively identified, Placer County entered into negotiations with United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and DPR, since portions of the conceptual route would cross both Folsom and Auburn State Recreation Areas (Note: USBR is the landowner of both Folsom Lake SRA and Auburn SRA, and DPR has an operating agreement to manage both of these facilities).